

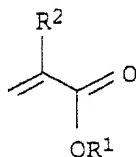
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We claim:

1. A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer obtainable by  
5 free-radical polymerization of

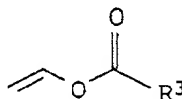
- a) 80 to 20% by weight of hydroxy-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl (meth)acrylate  
and, where appropriate, one or more compounds of the  
formula (A) or (B)

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(A)



(B)

with R<sup>1</sup> = H, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl,

R<sup>2</sup> = H, CH<sub>3</sub>

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R<sup>3</sup> = C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>24</sub>-alkyl

or mixtures thereof

in the presence of

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- b) 20 to 80% by weight of polyvinyl alcohol (PVA) and

- c) where appropriate 0 to 20% by weight of other  
polymerizable compounds (C).

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2. A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in  
claim 1, wherein the free-radical polymerization is an  
emulsion polymerization.

- 35 3. A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in  
either of claims 1 or 2, wherein hydroxyethyl methacrylate is  
employed as hydroxy-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl (meth)acrylate.

4. A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in  
40 any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the compounds of the formula  
(A) are selected from the group of methyl methacrylate,  
methyl acrylate, methyl acrylate, or mixtures thereof.

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5. A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in any of claims 1 or 4, wherein the compounds of the formula (B) are selected from the group of C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>24</sub> vinyl esters.
- 5 6. A process for preparing water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymers as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5 by free-radical polymerization in an aqueous or nonaqueous but water-miscible solvent or in mixed nonaqueous/aqueous solvents.
- 10 7. A process as claimed in claim 6, wherein the polymerization takes place in the presence of from 30 to 55% by weight of polyvinyl alcohol.
8. A pharmaceutical dosage form comprising at least one  
15 water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5 as coating agent, binder and/or film-forming excipient.
9. The use of water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymers as  
20 claimed in any of claims 1 to 5 as coating agent, binder and/or film-forming excipient in pharmaceutical dosage forms.

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